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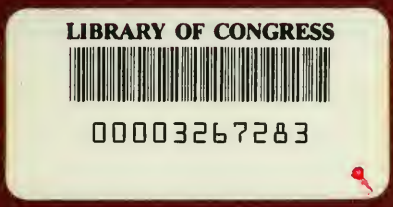

WAR POEMS

BY PETERS SISTERS

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E.P.P.
A.T.P.

MEMORANDUM.

1. Our War With Germany, A. T. P.
2. Under The Stars and Stripes, E. P. P.
3. Boys on to France, A. T. P.
4. Old Glory's Recognition, E. P. P.
5. The Slacker, A. T. P.
6. Do Your Best Boys, E. P. P.
7. The Negro's Right to Fight, A. T. P.
8. The Right Direction, E. P. P.
9. The Better Part, A. T. P.
10. With the Colors, E. P. P.
11. Triumph of the Tuscania, A. T. P.
12. Sammies Christmas Gift, E. P. P.
13. Sammies Christmas Dreams, A. T. P.
14. Pearls Unrecognized, E. P. P.
15. A Daughter of Ham, A. T. P.
16. A Spiritual Awakening, E. P. P.
17. Father of His People, A. T. P.
18. Paul Lawrence Dunbar, E. P. P.
19. A Slaves Dying Prayer, A. T. P.
20. The Negro's Progress, E. P. P.
21. The Cost of Repentance, A. T. P.
22. Defender of Right, E. P. P.
23. Sons of W. V. I., A. T. P.
24. Musing, E. P. P.

INTRODUCTION.

It is the very great pleasure of the writer to introduce to the poetical world Misses Ada Tress Peters, and Ethel Pauline Peters the only two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Peters, of Beckley, West Virginia.

These young ladies will be known to the poetical world as "The Peters Sisters."

Always seen together, and always doing nearly the same thing at the same time, and seldom, if ever talking about any subject, unless it be poetical, is one of the peculiar features of these two young ladies.

Miss Ada Tess is eighteen years of age while Miss Ethel Pauline is only seventeen years; though the younger, yet the elder in the poetical world, having started poetry writing while not yet nine years of age, and while confined to bed in a hospital. Miss Ada started to write three years later, and ever since that time each of the girls has been from time to time placing before the public some work on poetry.

The Peters Sisters have had very limited education. Each of them spent one and one half years in high school at Institute, West Virginia, under Prof. Byrd Prillerman.

Courteously Yours,

WM. F. DENNY.

The first poem written by Miss Ethel Pauline Peters while in Hospital and not yet nine years of age.

When I get an old lady,
I tell you what I'll do,
I'll patch my apron, make my dress
And hoe the garden too.

The first poem written by Miss Ada Peters.

Little birds up so high,
Who has taught you how to fly,
How to sing and how to play,
All the hot summer day?

God has taught us how to sing,
Early in the lovely spring,
He hath taught us how to play,
In his own glorious way.

PERFACE.

The sole intention of the Authors in writing these poems is to show the Negro's loyalty to the Stars and Stripes, in the war with Germany; and to show the need of unity of all men in the fight for democracy.

The Authors.

War Poems

Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.

OUR WAR WITH GERMANY.

I.

America and her Allies are now engaged
In a war that freedom might live,
That all nations may not be enslaved
Giving as all True Americans would give
Fighting lest Germany's Kaiser should spread
The spirit of feudalism over the earth,
That the Sons of Liberty may not be led
Captives from the land of their birth.

II.

While foreign field were strewn with dead
With folded arms we merely looked on
'Till the wronged people believed and said
"They are gamblers, in search of coin."
We became apoligist for our neutriality
While an uncivilized war waged on
Devoid of all principle and morality
Urged on by brutes in human form.

III.

When the country of Belgium was invaded
And It's inhabitants tortured and slain
When other defenseless towns were raided
And mines in neutral waters were lain
When the smoldering ruins of France we saw
The home of the world's greatest arts
Then Humanity forced us into this war
For America too, must do her part.

IV.

The Imperial German Government smiled
When the Sussex, and Lusitania went down
Unwarningly murdering American lives
While on peaceful missions bound
Should not this wicked and hideous crime
That sent our friends to watery graves
Help more close our hearts to bind
And strengthen us on our rugged way?

V.

Some of History's cherished monuments
Have wantonly and maliciously been destroyed
While plots that outrage man's common sense
By German Seditionist have been employed.
Like cowards they secretly tried to bribe

Our friend and neighbor country Mexico,
Those same conspirators and spies
Are sneakishly lurking within our doors.

VI.

Have not their deadly bombs been dropped
In Hospitals of our wounded boys?
Killing helpless ones upon their cots
Playing with American lives as with toys
With tear dim eyes we have heard,
Women and children victims crying for help
While these destructive missiles are hurled
Upon them in the jaws of death.

VII.

If the policy National Necessity is sustained
Treaty Obligation 'll be buried in the past
For the royal castle will again reign
Oe'r the common people's village at last
Thus the covenants that have been kept
As a tie of friendship that binds
Is forgotten in Germany's World Conquest
A vile insult to all man-kind.

VIII.

Boys you're fighting to preserve American Rights

To protect the homes of the brave.
And we're with you in this fight
Till Autocracy lies within her grave
The Red ,White and Blue, will be borne
As a true emblem of justice to all
For it gives the weary traveler a home
Then how could such a government fall?

IX.

We are struggling in a Common Cause
With only one purpose in our hearts
And that purpose is freedom for all
Made sacred by the blood of patriots
Young men how proud you must feel
To know you're defending a Noble Cause
That your life you owe to Liberty
To your countrymen and to your God.

X.

We see your bosom swells with pride
With love for the mother that gave
Her flesh, her blood, her only pride,
That the Star Spangled Bannner, might wave
We know again the respect you had
When your Dear Old Father firmly said,
"Be another George Washington, my lad
And sleep in an honored Martyr's grave."

XI.

When some of you beyond the clouds
With iron nerves are fighting at dizzy heights,

And on earth the cannon's roaring loud
Proclaims your comrades are in the fight
While the brave boys on the briny deep
Are sailing on blood-stained waves
But in the air on land or sea
You're fighting that Old Glory, might wave.

XII.

When you're in "No Man's Land."
Far from home annd friends you adore
Seek shelter in the hollow of God's hand,
'Till the tempest of war is oe'r,
"O God, may our brave boys return,
Bearing Freedom's Flag from over there
While men repenting to Thee shall turn
And Peace and Democracy reigns everywhere!

———:o:———

A FATHER OF INSPIRATION.

(Dedicated to President Byrd Prillerman)
There are many in every nation
That scorn those in the mire,
But few are fathers of inspiration
Like the President of W. V. I.

II.

The black Leader of the free
Bade me strive to be the best
But Honorable Byrd Prillerman helped me
To travel the road to success.

III.

Unlike those who seek to charm
The world with their selfish aims
He's guarding Ethiopia on the farm
For the good that might be gained.

IV.

West Virginia has given most
Of her sons to liberty
But she shall never boast
Of a Nobler Teacher than he.

V.

For when peaceful Uncle Sam
Was troubled by Belgium's cry
Ready to fight in foreign lands
Were those trained at W. V. I.

VI.

So could a race of civilization
Own a greater man than he
A Father of inspiration
And a leader of people free.

VII.

May God grant when our President
Has crossed the swelling tide
That his deeds be living monuments
To those whom he inspired.

VIII.

And may Ethiopia profit by
The standard he hath placed
And sons of W. V. C. I.

Be a credit to our race.

—By Ethel Pauline Peters.

God bless you, I share your thought, your President is indeed an able and noble man. Long may he live.

———:o:———

ORIGINAL POEM.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

(By E. P. Peters.)

April the sixth, Ninteen and seventeen,
Under the stars and stripes,
We were forcibly drawn
In a war for our rights.
We would be neutral no longer,
And hear humanity's plea,
Nor behold our vessels unwarningly sunk
By submarines at sea.
Freedom shall ever be
In the country where Glory waves,
And the golden land of Lafayette
Shall not be enslaved.

Boys make aKiser's poison gas
Unnable to kill American's power.
Feudalism shall not spread
Oe'r this free country of ours.
We'll help you show Germany's rulers
Feudalism can not defend,
Cultured civilized people, nor the
Rights of free born men.
Rulers that disregard treaties
And cause bloody wars in land
Shall never reign on libertys soil
To execute their plans.

Germany's strong aviation corps
Like winged birds sail the air
Dropping missles, taking innocent lives
In her brutish warfare.
She for many years prepared
Her selfishness to unfurl
With out warning or reason, to
Conquer and rule the world.
O, God help us to fight
For Democracy on foreign strands
That we might be delivered from
Our enemies wicked hands.

By spreading sedition through states
Kaiser struck patriotism a blow
Pretending to be our friend,
Intriguing with Japan and Mexico.
Our enemie's destructive pretense
On its deathly mission scuds
While America was being raided
With spies of German blood.
Her schemes can not make
Enemies of people that gave
Their prayers, lives, and all
That Old Glory might wave.

Victory by Germans would mean
Enslavement to the human race,
While once fair fields
Of France and ours lay waste.
America's cities would not stand
As homes of the free.
New York would lose her friend
The statue of liberty.
The dear flag would be destroyed
By a savage race,
And the richness of our country
Would be the Kaiser's estate.

But to win this war, we
Can not all take arms
Some must help Uncle Sam's boys
By buying Liberty Bonds.
Send lots of letters
For joy in them they'll find.
Save food for our boys
In France on firing lines.
Encourage them in camp
And they'll be proud to go
To fight for freedom, as
Their fathers fought years ago.

Democracy long hath reigned
In the land of the brave.
The cherished banner of Betsy Ross
Long o'er us hath waved.
T'was providence that directed
Us in the path of right.
Enabled us to live peacefully
In war helped us to fight.
Gave us Washington, Father of
Our country to help defend
The rights and freedom
Of his rising fellow men.

All in self defense boys
Your part you must play
Just as your friends are
Doing, on French soil today.
We are waiting and praying,
For you patriots and braves
To bring the glad news back
From Autocracy we're saved.
While in service, if your
Tasks seem hard to do,
Cheerfully do your best boys
For the red, white and blue.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters)

BOYS ON TO FRANCE.

Sons of America, do you not hear
The roaring of Germany's guns?
Get up and be busy; war is near
We must face kaiser Wilhelm.
Just as our fore-fathers years ago
Against the Red Coats, made their stand
So to France, you must go
And protect the honor of our Native Land.

II.

If God's on our side, we need not fear
For His Cause, has always won
Fight on though the price seems dear
Push forward, 'till the race is run.
Mothers you too, must do your part
In the impending strife
Clasp not the son to your heart
But give him to the Cause of Right.

III.

Show him you're willing to give
All in life you possess
Giving that Freedom might live,
And mothers they'll do the rest.
For their souls will then swell
With that Holy Divine Strength
That only Americans have felt
As from it's Fountain they drink.

IV.

Black Boys, Uncle Sam is calling you too,

Calling you men of African Birth
Will you to America be true?
And in the struggle prove your worth?
Boys, you may think it unfair to fight
That it's hard to have a patriotic zeal
For a country that denies us our rights
That pushes us back though we're free.

V.

But do good for evil we've learned
In the Book of Ever-lasting life
That in Heaven, a home, we might earn
Where Blessed Peace reigns and not strife.
Old Glory, you triumphantly wave
O'er the Land of the Free
Yet from the mobs we're not saved
To whom, for refuge must we flee?

VI.

Is it right hot-headed men should take
The law of the land in their hands?
Can innocence be proved at a burning stake?
No, then why not give us a chance?
But boys of African Blood be true
Ready and willing the Cause to defend
Then may the Red, White and Blue
Forget color and recognize men.

VII.

Dear Flag, we've proved ourselves Masters of Art
Great inventions to the world we've given

Yet in the government we take no part
Then why are we to war driven?
If in jim crow cars we must stay
Too illiterate to ride with the whites
Are we fit to sleep in a soldiers grave
Or, illiterate stand by your side and fight?

VIII.

Columbia, when on the battle-field
Our soldiers, dying whisper, "I thirst"
Let this woman attend to their needs
She's a dark skin, Red Cross Nurse
Give us the chance and we'll show
The skill and bravery of the fairer-sex
How we'-ll face the enemy's blow
Though we know the stand means death.

IX.

O, God, could a stronger race do more
For American Freedom to gain
Than my people who bore
The curse of slavery's chains
When across the waters you're borne
Boys, to the Land of Some-where
You're defending Our Homes
And "God Bless you," is our prayer.

X.

Some day the war 'll be o'er
In triumph Old Glory'll be borne
Back to American shores
Back to Home, Sweet Home
'"Till then boys, we bid you adieu

Each one of you play well the game
And may God be with you
'Till we all meet again.

———:o:———

OLD GLORY'S RECOGNITION.

(By E. P. Peters.)

From the cotton fields or Georgia,
Where our grand parents were slaves,
Comes a freedom we can welcome,
When the flag of justice waves;
While o'er the land is floating
The Red, White, and Blue,
The black boys are rising
To the old flag they'll be true,
They are willing to die for Liberty,
They hate the cursed revenge.
For Old Glory's crushing prejudice,
And recognizing her slaves' freed men.

We have sought for knowledge
From the great that we have found,
And are earnestly striving to regain,
Our lose heritage of renown.
It was not slavery's cruelties
That made black patriots in the land,
But the fifty years of progress
And the rights we did demand.
The black brains that were trampled
Now helping hands will lend,
For Old Glory's crushing prejudice,
And recognizing her slave freed men.

Clouds of difficulties rose
When four million the Old Flag faced,
But with civilization's birth

The black people of earth,
Have once more become a race.
Hewers of wood and drawers of water,
For many years we've been;
But now with education's light,
We are a people again.
Boys remember that we are rising,
In a country that we'll befriend,
For Old Glory's crushing prejudice,
And recognizing slave freed men.

We are a patriotic people;
We're proud to see the colors wave,
That signifies justice to all,
In a free land of the brave;
That acknowledges there is black brain;
For God to all deals fair,
And Uncle Sam is growing greater,
For liberty we too can share.
We are steadily growing to success,
And helping all men to ascend,
While Old Glory's crushing prejudice
And recognizing slave freed men.

Old Glory, 'twas fifty years or more
We prayed hard to deliver
Thy black people from burning stakes,
To rights that God gives her.
Just as we on thy fertile fields,
Fought bravely to be free,
We will fight and die for thee.
O, flag for thy liberty,
We'll keep your colors floating,
And your rights we will defend
For you are crushing prejudice
And recognizing slave freed men.

THE SLACKER.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters)
God forbid ere man was born
To crush honor beneath his feet
That the light of day should dawn
Upon one, who from duty flees
While on Freedom's Bleeding Altar,
His Noble Comrades have bled
But he stands idle a slacker
Disgraced before living and dead.

II.

Friends is there one among you
Who has shunned the Righteous Cause
Spurned the Red, White and Blue?
That stands for justice to all
How can you silently sit
When Liberty hangs in the scale?
Where is the spirit of seventy-six?
That you would be en-slaved.

III.

Do you deem your life greater
Than the just rights of man
Then you're a fool and traitor
Exiled in your Native Land,
Rough and steep is the way
Leading to the victory we seek
But death and a coward's grave
Is what the slacker will meet.

IV.

For dead must be the soul
That slumbers while Humanity Calls
And beholding his brother's foe
Cries, "Give me peace and not War"

O, Slacker what fate awaits thee
How shamefull will be thy end
Unless thou fight to free
All races and colors of men.

V.

How can you bear to see
Christianity laid in the dust?
By one, who hates Democracy
And the God, whom we trust
One who has boastingly debased
The virtue of true womanhood
That poligamy takes the place
Where Sacred Rights once stood.

VI.

And though you were not born
In the Land of the Free
And your kindred at home
Is far away oe'r the sea
Eternal Allegiance you swore
To the Stars and Stripes
When you stepped on our shore
To enjoy equal rights.

VII.

To our protection you fled
As a bird seeks its nest
With mercy we pillowed your head
That the wanderer might rest
Drinking from the cup of kindness
Administered by loving hands
Your eyes lost their blindness
As you saw the Spirit of Man.

VIII.

And now the flag needs you

Will you stand like a man
Or, do you feel, as slackers do
I must help the Father Land
Let conscience be your guide
And it will lead you a'right
To Columbia's bleeding side
'Neath Liberty's burning light.

IX.

It's true we all can't go
To the land of Somewhere
But we can strike a blow
By helping those, Over There
Thus the German Kaiser'll know
He cannot enslave free men
And that every American Soul
Will fight him to the end.

X.

So when the Victory is won
And the world is at peace
When the shedding of blood is done
And mankind again is free
Uncle Sam, if giving up life
For the deliverance of men
Does not give all, equal rights
Who will be, the slacker then?

———:o:———

DO YOUR BEST BOYS.

(Original Poem by E. P. Peters.)

Do the best you can, boys,
In Uncle Sam's call to arms,
Fear not the Boches' bluff noise;
Be ready, brave, true and calm.

Keep the dear old banner flying
With your bayonets its rights demand,
Show the world you're upward striving,
And doing the best you can.

II.

O, loyal citizens go not unheeded,
To the call humanity makes,
Your money and help is needed,
To keep the United States.
The appeals to you sons of Liberty,
And to those from foreign strands,
To protect those who protected thee,
By doing the best you can.

III.

Your eyes opened at freedom's touch,
So come now, do not wait.
Show Wilhelm you're with us,
For the welfare of our state.
Let not your hearts be confined;
Let feuds die with the past,
Strengthen us in this perilous time,
Ye of all races, colors and class.

IV.

Though scant your purse may be,
Keeping you from giving your best,
Explaining, you can make others see,
The need of buying W. S. S.
For the Red Cross' noble work,
We humbly ask your aid again,
Pray do not from duty shirk,
But do the best you can.

V.

We know its far away boys
To a strange land you go,

But fight to keep home's joy
From destruction of the foe.
Yes they will make it warm,
For you in No Man's Land.
But remember that you are American born
And do the best you can.

VI.

If you get blue and lonesome
Forget it all and smile,
Be proud that you're saving home,
If its only for awhile.
To your countrymen be true,
Hold high the rights of man;
Fret not at what you're told to do
Just do the best you can.

VII.

When you hear your comrades grumble,
Pat him kindly on the back,
Tell him right must not tumble,
Because some fellow grows slack.
If you try this simple plan,
Courage's spark you can renew,
And Sammies will realize their stand.
For the Red, White and Blue.

VIII.

When shells fall fast around you,
And perhaps you would like to hide,
Think what great things we do,
By working without growing tired.
Boys don't mind the war cloud,
Fight for your people and land,
We of you patriots are proud,
So do the best you can.

THE NEGROE'S RIGHT TO FIGHT.

O, ye men of African Creed,
America is our home
We were born among the Free
Though bondage claimed our own.
I know we have forgiven
All the wrongs done a race
And as American Citizens
Are ready to take our place.

II.

Boys we were right to fight
For how oft have we prayed
For justice and Equal rights
Yea, for this trying day
Ethiopia sends forth her Herald
In answer to our prayer
Crying Freedom for the World
And Democracy everywhere.

III.

Noble Comrades 'tis our black hands
That will bear Old Glory across
The fields of No Man's Land
To Humanity's Bleeding cross.
There we will wrestle with death
Till the great Victory is gained
And when we are laid to rest
God grant we die not in vain.

IV.

Out of this war will rise
Not the black man of old
But one who fought and died
The true American Negro.
So boys every one should fight

To preserve a Just Cause
It's only fair and right
To give our lives, our all.

V.

For when Belgium was robbed
Of life and years of toil
Faster beat our heart-throbs
Warning us that duty calls.
And then we saw France struggle
In the conflict just begun
As she called her Black Brother's
To help conquer the cruel Huns.

VI.

Boys as a Brother to Man
We've proved loyal in the past
Thus winning the right to stand
And defend the Stars and Stripes.
So friends, we'll keep the trust
That swells our bosom with pride
And She'll never trail the dust
While we are by Her Side.

VII.

Uncle Sam we are with you
For you are with the Right
And with hearts that are true
We'll help you win this fight
We stand ready at your command
For you seek not personal prize
Wiith the enemy hand to hand
We'll save that principal or die.

VIII.

Brave Warriors, when we leave

For the trench and fireing line
Our hearts will ache with grief
To leave loved ones behind
But there is a Greater Love
That leads us on and on,
Leads us through flames and floods
To the "Great Awakening Morn."

IX.

Look boys as Old Glory waves
We behold the spirits of man
Lincoln and Douglas from the grave,
Guide us as to foreign strands
They salute the Stars and Stripes
These Honored Myrters, side by side
Showing us we've a right to fight
As they nobly fought and died.

———:o:———

THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

(Original Poem by E. P. Peters.)

In nineteen I was grieved to hear,
The murmur of many strange tongues,
That told in a struggle near,
Liberty would sacrifice her sons.
Strong, weak, and innocent will perish
Until the right cause is won.
For man's life is not cherished
By the beastly, heartless huns.

And as I sat busy thinking,
How to help protect the stripes,
I saw my black brother drinking
From the cup of disfranchised rights.
I saw sons of honest toil,
Robbed of life and protection.

Yet they are answering Democracy's call
And striving in the right direction.

The black mothers of Tennessee,
Are giving their blood to Frannce,
And only asking of people free,
That they be given a chance.
From the blood hounds thirsty flight,
They are asking to be saved.
For men should enjoy equal rights
Where the Star Spangled Banner waves.

Just as God rained down manna,
And the children of Isreal fed;
He'll give sons of Louisiana,
The rights for which they've pled.
For we're not fighting for possession,
Nor wishing that others should fall
But traveling in the right direction,
To a home that welcomes all.

So remember that we've not protested,
To do a loyal citizens part,
Though the memory of Houston, Texas,
Is still burning in our hearts.
Our duty is to Glory, boys,
No matter what falls our lot,
That Democracy may not be destroyed,
And that the paths be not forgot.

I saw Ethiophia Slowly rise,
In the midst of scornful men,
Guided by power from on high,
And deserted by earthly friends.
But her voice is not still,
Nor hid is her black face,

For her patriots of San Juan hill,
In history have no place.

And though our tongues were bridled
Because we were sons of Ham,
We could not stand by idle,
When needed by Uncle Sam.
With heart sympathy we listened,
To innocent mouths crying for bread,
Still unseen we have risen
That the hungry might be fed.

Old Glory you have many friends,
But we have proved the truest,
Although you've failed to defend
Your sons of East St. Louis,
From poverty and oppression,
The weary wanderer of night,
Starts in the right direction
To help win the perilous fight.

Mother when clouds sweep before you,
And your sons you sacrifice,
Be proud brave Ethiophia,
Is still dying for the right.
Dropping college books and professions,
Leaving an Educational chance,
We follow in the right direction,
To help our brothers in France.

To preserve Christianity,
We did not ponder or wait,
And fought to save humanity,
While our comrades burned at stake.
But boys hold high the Stripes,
Give them your strong protection,
For you shall inherit eternal life
That strive in the right direction.

So let us forget our trials,
  Though like pilgrims we roam,
But thank God we're not exiles,
  And America is our home.
Let the spirit of sixty-five
  In every bosom swell,
For Democracy ever strives
  That in paradise all will be well.

No longer we're patient or humble,
  For the barbaric crimes we see,
Shall not cause justice to crumble,
  Nor enslave old Liberty.
So black sons of rejection,
  Be loyal, be brave, be true,
Go forth in the right direction,
  Defend the Red, White and Blue.

———:o:———

THE BETTER PART.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters)

On Boston soil in 1775,
  When America fought to be free
Crispus Attucks a Negro 'didst die
  'Didst shed his blood for Liberty;
Though slavery's yoke was upon him
  Though his people had no voice
A heart beat for his fellow-men
  And Freedom or death his choice.

II.

His body in shot torn rags
  Fell beneath the Stars and Stripes
Lifting his eyes saw the Flag
  For which he gave his life

To that Celestial City, went forth
The soul of the Black Patriot,
As he gave up the ghosts
We chose the Better Part.

III.

When Spain fought her Cuban Brothers
Crushing the rights of a weaker race
Our hearts in sympathy were troubled
As we saw Humanity disgraced
Our boys said to Uncle Sam,
"Is not this war our war?
Then give us power to stand
And help defend the Cause."

IV.

In the charge up San Juan
When the rough riders faced defeat
When lost victory before them dawned
And behind them a scorned retreat.
It was then the True Soul
Of the black troops were tried
And the story we all know
Of how they fought and died.

V.

Through facing the Spaniards fire,
Through Our Blood, that was spilled
Old Glory was placed on high
On the summit of the hill.
Such deeds have buried the tomahawk
Healed the wounds of bleeding hearts,
Together the White and Black walk
To choose, The Better Part.

VI.

Thus the two races, in union
Toiled along the road of life

In a brotherly communion
Free from hatred and strife
When from far o'er the sea
Came Humanity's Call for help
Came groans of people bereaved
In a struggle of Freedom and Death.

VII.

We saw German Soldiers Kill
Siberia's peace loving Sons
Saw blood of innocent ones spilled
In the mouth of murderous guns,
Heard the cries of women and children
Beholding their humble homes afire
Then into dark slavery driven
Like cattle, to perish and die.

VIII.

Bleeding Belgium, cried to live
As she struggling gave all
That earthly mortals could give
To preserve the Righteous Cause.
France stretched forth her hand
The hand that proved our friend
Pleading from, "No Man's Land"
For the Freedom of Men.

IX.

Old Glory, your Black Boys
Long to see, Democracy reign,
For Freedom's fully enjoyed
By those, who have worn chains.
Uncle Sam, we're by your side
Fast within beats our hearts
And when we say goodbye
We will choose, The Better Part.

X.

A black mother pressed her son
To the bosom that nursed him
For the parting hour had come
To help defend his countrymen.
Looking into his eyes she said,
"On the altar of thy heart
Burns a spirit that has led
You to choose, The Better Part.

XI.

I who have watched o'er thee
From the very moments of birth
Feel the patriotism you feel
Knowing my boy'll prove his worth.
If this be the last time
To press you to my heart,
Die fighting on the firing line
And choose, The Better Part.

XII.

His countenance now bore
A greater love, a greater pride
For the Uniform he wore
And the woman by his side.
"Mother he said, Thy Sacrifice
Is not made in vain
For the Stars and Stripes
Shall wave in peace again.

XIII.

I fear not, the cruel Huns
Nor their horrible deeds and threats,
For is it in my people born
To cringe, from a Noble Death?
Then mother, wipe away thy tears
And kiss me 'ere I start
For I cannot linger here
And choose, The Better Part."

WITH THE COLORS.

(Original Poem by E. P. Peters.)

Faded is the light of day,
When I have finished my task,
And in a land far away,
Your memory holds me fast.
For it seems but yesterday,
I held you on my knee,
Never thinking that you would play
In the game for Democracy.
But my son I am glad
My feeble fingers can knit
For patriots of the service flag,
Who are proudly doing their bit.

II.

I'm sacrificing when I stay,
At home where you have been,
And toiled daily that you may,
Help the right cause win.
Vacant is thy room above me,
And empty is thy chair,
But onward, for 'tis victory,
Awaiting those playing fair.
And though silver is my hair,
I'm still your faithful mother;
World freedom is my prayer
For I am with the colors.

III.

We the mothers of the free
Are proud that we toiled not alone
In the fight to keep Autocracy
From the heart of Liberty's home.
All nations are in a stir,
For mankind's being slaughtered

By the hands of German Kultur,
Who has no excuse to offer.
Brutality in our face is slamed,
Morality they've tried to smother,
But fear not dear Uncle Sam,
For I am with the colors.

IV.

We will preserve Democracy,
No matter what it may cost,
We're servants of the Almighty,
And followers of the cross.
In the dreaded war zone
Where man seeks not for rest,
Loyalty and bravery is shown,
By aid of the fairest sex.
Red is the cross they wear.
They're helping our wounded brothers
We cherish them as gems rare
Who are serving with the colors.

V.

In the Y. M. C. A.
Brave Sammy takes a part,
For 'tis encouragement by the way,
And peace to our troubled heart.
The sun of eighteen and nineteen
Is smiling on them over there,
And though no longer they're seen
We're helping them everywhere.
Foreigners, strangers, black and white,
Are working with each other,
Striving, dying to win the fight,
Forgetting race class and color.

VI.

Greater is the spirit of today,

Than that of seventy six
For fuedalism can not stay
Where Democracy doth exist.
The Lusitanian victims we saw,
But still loyal we stand,
'Till o'er is the bloody war,
And safe is our native land.
To Berlin we will gladly go,
And if it need be further,
Just to let the whole world know
That we are with the colors.

———:o:———

TRIUMPH OF THE TUSCANIA.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

America drops a Laurel
On the Tuscania's dead
While war's cold wind howl
O'er our uncovered heads.

II.

Though silent now the tongue
Of that brave gallant host
The race is yet to run,
The prize is not lost.

III.

We still hear them sing
Awaiting the water's call
As if death was a thing
Welcome to us all.

IV.

Asleep in a watery grave
Thy Noble Spirits still live

As to Freedom Thou gave
In like manner we give.

V.

Mother your son slumbers
While his unfinished work
Is carried on by numbers
Whose duties will never shirk.

VI.

Falling your son gave all
That human heart could give
To save the Righteous Cause
And his country from ill.

VII.

Then mothers do not cry
For thou suffereth not alone
Comfort others that must die
For their flag and home.

VIII.

When America is safe
From the Barbaric Huns
And Kaiser finds his place
Is not in the sun.

IX.

When Autocracy is crushed
By the hands of right
And Feudalism's doctrine hushed
From those seeking the light.

X.

Then the Tuscania's Boys
Shall triumph in the grave
For their comrades loyal
Fought and saved the day.

SAMMY'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

(Original Poem by E. P. Peters.)

When the merry Christmas day,
  Dawned in No Man's Land,
And Christmas boxes from home,
  Given Sammies on foreign strand;
All heads bowed low,
  While Old Glory was raised,
Giving thanks to man,
  And to the Christ Child praise.
When prayer had been offered,
  Happy, two trenches did depart,
All save one remained
  With bowed head and aching heart.

II.

As the old flag rippled,
  He cried, May she live,
Always for the right, but
  Oh, God, what can I give?
To my kind people in
  The land of the free,
Who has sacrificed to
  Send this box to me,
Oh, what can I give
  For the cause of right.
But his cries was hushed
  In the command to fight.

III.

With pride he fought, while
  Bursting shells filled the air,
Smiling faced the enemy,
  Tried not his life to spare.
Stood while comrades fell beside
  Him, fighting with wounding hand,

To keep the cursed Autocracy
From reigning in the land.
But as the battle grew hotter,
The Sammies filled with fear,
For in death their Captain lay
With the enemy near.

IV.

At last from out the smoke,
The wounded hands did raise.
"Boys on to victory, be
Brave and fight," he cried.
Then fighting like true Americans,
The battle was on again,
The enemy retreated leaving field,
Of sleeping and suffering men.
Dying their leader cried, pointing
To the Stars and Stripes,
"Boys I've given all,
To help you win the fight."

V.

"Don't retreat in battle, fight
On till all is well,
Till the right has won,
And peace on earth dwells.
When you fight hardest, pray
God will help you give
Your life to old Liberty
That free people might live.
So boys meet me when
Your country you have saved.
Goodbye all and Old Glory
May she ever wave."

VI.

When the sun hid its face,

Behind the snowy hills,
When the battle field was cleared,
And thundering cannons stilled,
The stars from their firmanent
Gave forth their brillant light,
Guarding as they did the
Shepards, sleeping Sammies through night.
The old flag still waved,
Though torn in the fight,
Cheering patriots dead and
Dying for Democracy and it's rights.

VII.

When Christmas night was o'er,
From a long sweet repose,
Boys of Red, White, and Blue,
Sad but bravely rose.
Each man performed his duty,
Each offered a morning prayer.
Bugles summoned to mess hall,
In the land of somewhere.
Their hearts beat with patriotism
While grieved countenance showed respect
To the comrade who saved them
From captivity and death.

VIII.

When the spot was chosen,
And the opening waiting there,
Sammies marched with tearful eyes,
While music filled the air.
The old flag was borne
And waved slowly over head,
While the patriot was lowered
Into a country martyr's grave.

And the epitaph was written,
  Love for Stars and Stripes
Could not be greater than
  The man that gives his life.

————:o:————

SAMMIE'S CHRISTMAS DREAM.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

An American rises on Christmas Day
  In the dawn of coming manhood
Falling upon bended knee to pray
  As his teachings bade him do
Humbly asking his God to guide
  Him in the paths of right
When absent from his mother's side
  To make his way in life.
Begging for strength lest he fall
  Discouraged by the way
Ready to help Humanity's Cause
  Of those, who've gone astray.

II.

Pleading for the girl and boy
  That drifting with the tide
Seeking only pleasure and joy
  Losing self respect and pride
Change their hearts 'ere they meet
  The doom that will surely come
Though tears of regret they weep
  Is useless when life is done.
When their hair is fading gray
  May from repenting lips be told
Dear Jesus passed by the way
  And saved my dying soul.

III.

For the sinful father he prays
That craves and begs for rum
Sending his wife to her grave
From the shack in the slums.
Leaving two little blue-eyed girls
To make their way in life
Ignorant of the sinful world
Of it's temptations and strife,
O, God may thy Guiding Angel
Lead these little Maidens fair
Out of earthly harm and danger
To Thy Holy House of Prayer.

IV.

Again O, God, I beseech Thee
To bless my Native Land
Divided may we never be
For only united we stand.
If cruel war should ever come
In the Land of the Free
May I proudly shoulder a gun
And die for Liberty.
May we forever fight.
That Democracy might win
Ever live the Cause of Right
Is my Christmas Prayer, Amen.

V.

Then slowly he raises at length
Refreshed in his morning's prayer
His face radiant with Divine strength
That God's messengers planted there.
From this brave lad we gleam
A lesson for young and old
That'll make life a pleasant dream

Unmarred by sin and woe.
For how happy we'd all be
Instead of thinking of self
If we'd give others in need
Helping those, in distress.

VI.

Sisters and brothers clinging to him
They join the family fire-side
Mother and Father greeting them
Their only jewels, there only pride.
Suddenly on the air there falls
The chiming of Christmas Bells
Shaking the ancient church walks
As joyfully the good news tell
Their voices in harmony blend
In the old fashioned pew
Singing to the Sons of Men
A song of Love and Truth.

VIII.

He hears the white haired priest
Tell the story of our Christ
Of the babe that would teach
Men the way of Eternal Life
How in a manger he lay
Close to his mother's breast
Upon a lowly bed of hay
To pay man's sinful death
An example for us to be
Meek and lowly of heart
Seeking not the front seat
But satisfied with our lot.

VIII.

While the shepherds by night
Watched their flock of sheep

They saw a wonderful light
A great star in the east.
A loud noise was heard
An angel stood before them
Saying "Peace on Earth,
Good Will to Men."
When the child was found
They gave thanks to God
Who's Son to earth came down
And filled the world with Love.

IX.

As Christ toiled day by day
The blind saw, the dumb talked,
And to a cripple he said,
"Take up thy bed and walk."
Thus man's soul was redeemed
For Christ the mortgage payed
His blood the sinful world cleaned
And taught us how to pray
On the cross with thorn clad head
To his promise still was true
"Father, forgive them," He said,
"They know not what they do."

X.

Floating in the morning's breeze
The old flag, silent and serene
Awakens Sammie from his sleep
From his happy Christmas Dream.
Then Sammie saluteing the Stars and Stripes
With swelling breat exclaimed
I've pledged you honor and life
That world Democracy will reign
As this brave soldier sits

Smiling in his trench Over There
Lo, a song falls from his lips
His Country's National Air.

———:o:———

PEARLS UNRECOGNIZED.

(Original Poem by E. P. Peters.)

Oh wandering pilgrims of Virginia,
Who made you noted men.
Whom was ever your defender,
And proved old Glory's friend.
Was it not back in sixteen
When your unfree tongues were still,
You ignorantly bought pearls unseen,
For slaves of your selfish will.

II.

In vales and on historic hills,
Where your gallant heroes sleep,
Once Ethiophians your soil tilled,
From dawn till sunset peace.
Raised grain and your cattle fed,
In your business planned and advised,
Without place to lay their heads
Your own pearls unrecognized.

III.

From tobacco made you wealthy,
Your cruelty was humbly borne
Slave cooks made you healthy,
Black boys protected your homes,
With maimed bodies and chained hands,
Died to make your sons free,
Rare gems in a slave land,
Robbed of rights and liberty.

IV.

Mother Nature doth sadly gaze
On the sunlit southern plains,
Pityinng hands forced to raise
Crops for their masters gain.
Tilling fields of cane and cotton
That you heartless masters rest,
And your home builders you've forgotten
Laid foundations for your success.

V.

Scarred backs of unpaid toil,
Motherly rocked your brave sons,
While their black faces spoiled
All good things they'd done.
For two hundred and forty years
Served you faithfully as a friend,
Unpitied dwelled in want and fear,
Four million helpless uncounted gems.

VI.

Naked on the auction block,
You separated mother and child,
At their pleadings only mocked,
On their pitiful condition smiled.
Forgiving humanity toiled patiently on,
Sacrificing for your boys and girls,
While poverty on the cabins dawned,
Of the uncared for hated pearls.

VII.

From whipping posts of plantation,
Rose innocent cries of man,
Music of a southern Nation,
Execution of their commands.
Still loyal with heart aches,

They came eager to your aid
Pearls that perished at burning stakes,
You a leading people made.

VIII.

While wealth made you able,
To do other honerable 'deeds,
The crumbs from your table,
Were left for those in need.
Honored by Ethiophia's children,
Served by their willing hands,
You forgot you once were pilgrims,
And crushed the rights of man.

IX.

Your words were deemed great,
As proud emperors of Rome,
Sowing carless seeds of waste,
Unthankful of having a home.
In ignorance gloom kept a race,
Taught them to steal and fraud;
Morality shamefully did debase,
Told them nothing of a God.

X.

Loved ones their only pride,
Rags their physical protector,
Independence spark slowly died
In hearts humiliation melted.
Brave gems from their people sold,
Tried hard to forget their pain,
Noble emotion blossomed in their souls,
Reminding them black sons have
brains.

XI.

The long uneducated minds,
Gradually in wisdom grew broad,

Soul salvation they did find,
In a true forgiving God.
When through the night they prayed,
That their sons might be free,
Asked forgiveness for those who made,
Slaves of pearls and humanity.

XII.

Low bowed heads snowy white,
Stood in every vabin door,
Thankful that the bloody night,
God suffered to pass o'er.
Tear stained cheeks smiled with pleasure
Of being in a revolutionized world.
For Freedom their long lost treasure
Returned to unrecognized pearls.

———:o:———

A DAUGHTER OF HAM.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

A little maiden left home and friends
To brave the storms of life's sea
Filled with ambition for Great Things
With hopes of a Race just free
Born with a longing desire to help
Humanity regardless of color or creed
Made her the Sunshine, where ere she dwelt
To the friendless, and those in need.

II.

Purity of thought, blinded her eyes
To the world and it's selfish aims
Of men and women daily beguiled
In search of favor and fame

Crushing people because of birth
Because of blood flowing in their veins
Thinking not of the soul and it's worth
Nor recognizing the power of brains.

III.

Little did the Noble Child realize
Of disappointments not afar off
Of opportunities to be denied
And battles that must be fought
I see her as she smilingly bade
Childhood's happy scenes adieu
And turning sought the untrodden way
That led to friends and foes anew.

IV.

Behold our heroine makes her way
Through the 'midst of the city's poor
As she walks we hear her pray
For the victims of poverty and woe
Suddenly across the path there falls
A form motionless at her feet
While to her ear comes a faint call
"Give me food that I may eat."

V.

Thus two earthly mortals take leave
And start on life's journey refreshed

VI.

"When I lie hungry by the road
Thou gavest me bread to eat
Lightening the burden, of a weary soul
With a spirit so humble and meek
Though cursed thy dark skin be
Continue to feed God's Lambs
And good will, shall follow thee
Thou Faithful Daughter of Ham."

One because of the blessing received
The other saved from hunger and death
They shall meet in that Holy Land
When the sea gives up it's dead
Our Beloved Daughter of Ham
And the hungry that was fed.

VII.

She has labored for many days
Helping alike both Saints and thieves
And with eager hands, to them gave
All she had, even to her need
The body fatigued and careworn
Cries out for bread and jam
For Humanity's burden daily borne
Grew heavy to the Daughter of Ham.

VIII.

When despairing of her quest
She heard voices happy and gay
And saw people richly dressed
Entering a door by the way
Hoping here to find her goal
Footsteps are turned to the crowd
Where a servant fills the door
With a king's air so proud.

IX.

"Pray what can I do for you?"
Said the servant, to the maid
"I'm starving give me food"
Our little pilgrim said,
Then the servant, with a ghastly stare
Hastily replied, "I'm sorry mam
You are forbidden to eat in there
For you are a Daughter of Ham."

X.

Then passing into the night
  She offered to heaven a prayer
That some one would bear the light
  To sinning men and women fair
Lo, as the stars gave forth
  Bright light o'er all the land
To God's Throne marched the soul
  Of the dying Daughter of Ham.

XI.

Sons of men why hurl
  Hate and scorn at one another
When Christ died for the world
  And not for race or color
He dying shed his blood
  That we all might live
In unity and love
  Ever ready to forgive

XII.

On the face man look
  And if it pleases the eye
We blindly shield a wolf
  Oft times a thief and spy
But God seeth the heart
  And judges us thereby
Thus all can own a part
  In a home on high

XIII.

When our eyes grow blind
  With the veil of years
May we leave behind
  A record honored and dear
So both rich and lowly
  Remember the Bleeding Lamb
And forget not the story
  Of the Daughter of Ham.

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.

Upon the long hard frozen ground,
  Snow flakes lay thick and white;
And twilight scarcely its way found,
  When it was lost in night.

In a palace of wealth and beauty,
  Happy was wife, husband and child,
Forgetting faith and Christian duty,
  Following vanity, fame, and style.

Suddenly from out the silence came,
  A loud rap upon the door,
And before them with unknown name,
  Stood a frail form covered with snow.

Then husband ordered bread and wine,
  To redden the pale guests face,
While a servant was commanded find
  The weary stranger a resting place.

The food of the very best,
  Pilgrim was invited to eat,
And slowly as one in distress,
  He rose upon his aged feet.

"You are very kind he said,
  To lend me a helping hand,
You shall for all be paid,
  For you are a brother to man."

Clothed in a costly evening gown,
  The proud wife before them stood;
With upright head and scornful frown,
  Looked upon the begger of food.

"Have I not seen you before?"

Of the stranger she inquired.
"Yes," he answered, "among the poor,
You've seen and passed me by."

Taking innocent children from unknown friend
Wife left blinded to mankind's plea,
But husband followed Pilgrim to defend,
The cause of suffering humanity.

With Pilgrim who long had borne
The burden of a sinful world,
Husband entered a drunkard's home,
And rescued his friendless girl.

Clothed in his coat of fur,
The unpitied was sheltered from cold
Into his rich home took her,
To teach her of the soul.

"I've brought Alice a playmate"
Said husband to his wife.
But she proudly refused to take
The poor into her child's life.

So innocent children ignorant of class,
Became devoted to each other.
While o'er them was passed,
The cruel sentence, of Alice's mother.

"She must not stay here John,"
She said, "You must go alone,
And take away the low born,
You unthinkingly brought into our home."

"It is God's will," he replied,
"I'll fight till the victory's won,

Never again will I drift with the tide,
For I'm needed in the slums."

At wifes request, clergymen talked,
To husband how he was losing,
The dignity of their Christian walk,
With the poor they thought amusing.

Husband in silence had remained
Until his friends ceased to come,
Then from the pulpit he exclaimed,
"Duty calls me in the slums.

Taking with her their only child,
Wife joined her society friends;
Charmed by luxury and style,
And blinded to her sin.

On bended knees at night fall,
When mankind goes to rest,
Christian on the Savior called
To strengthen him in distress.

His life was deprived of sunshine,
Or all he had was gone.
But Pilgrim came the second time
And guided him from wrong.

So again in the narrow path,
Teaching sons and daughters of men,
Christian helped the downtrodden class,
To come out of their sins.

Saloon keepers, bartenders, gamblers,
Vile men that swear and curse,
Willingly stopped their sinful ramble
And became a part of Christian's church.

When told of his childs death,
Christian grieved not nor mourned,
For he'd sacrificed pleasure and wealth,
To join her round God's throne.

Though bent with toil and grief,
His work the world was demanding,
He lived to tell of a peace,
That passes all understanding.

Smiling upon his friends with pride,
He bade them meet him there,
And entered his chamber and died,
With the Holy book of prayer.

As the prodigal son returned home,
So unto her husband did wife,
Finding God had claimed his own,
And given him eternal life.

In grief kneeling down by husband,
She looked heavenward to pray
When before her stood Pilgrim
The street beggar she'd turned away.

Pilgrim's countenance became bright and pure,
His worn rainment spotless and white
"Now," she cried, "I know you,
You are the truth and light."

She saw as a shepard sees,
That cares not for his fold,
The child she hoped to be,
Left hungry, penniless, and cold.

"O, John, what shall I do,"
She cried, "I've scorned humanity."

Child whispered, "God will save you,
For He saved Pa and me."

At last forgiveness had come,
Upward strived child and wife,
To meet their sleeping loved ones
When the soul seeks its flight.

———:o:———

FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

In the year 1858
On a Virginian Plantation
Was born a babe who someday
Would walk and talk with nations
In his veins flowed the blood
Of Ethiopia's Noble Hearted Sons
Born 'midst slavery's mire and mud
A great leader of men had come.

II.

In a rough hewn board hut
Booker saw the light of day
Blessed with a kind mother's trust
In her arms he fondly lay
His childish eyes did not gaze
Upon fine paintings on the wall
But watched little pickanninies play
While water in the kettle boiled.

III.

The child of Nature boasted not
Of proud ancestory or titled kin
For bondage had fallen his lot
And four million of his fellow men

Deep in the heart of that boy
A spark of independence burned
Early losing the thrill for toys
Longing for a chance to learn.

IV.

Just before the dawn of day
When the world's lost in dream
The lad heard his mother pray
And there the truth was gleamed
From then was waged a battle
From then his life work begun
To enlighten the Human chattels
When 'ere the hour should come.

V.

At last God heard the pleas
Of the four million humble souls
And suffered them to be free
To serve their God of old.
With the North and South's decision
The slave child's hope was realized
Going forth to prepare his mission
He bade his lowly habitat Goodbye.

VI.

Toiling through sunshine and rain
Working patiently in the salt mills,
Took unto himself a name
The proudest that history could give.
An unseen eye, saw a day
Drawing near; when the world's readers
Beholding his works would say
"He too, is Father of His People."

VII.

As in the days of old

Brave Romans with armors of steel
Met in the arena their foe
Either to kill, or be killed.
So with his schooling completed
Booker Washington, now went forth
To conquer or to be defeated
True to his boyhood oath.

VIII.

His helmet the Word of God,
Freely given to those that ask
His sword a heart of love
And Divine truth, his only mask.
Thus clad in this court of mail
That protects the souls of men
On life's stormy sea set sail
To battle against fog and wind.

IX.

Ever in the quest of Knowledge
Took up the study of law
Entered the famous Hampton Institute
Preparing to stand in Congress Hall.
But providence had a Nobler Cause,
For this young man to pursue
Throwing down the books of law
Sought his works in fields anew.

X.

It was then Tuskeege called him
At last had come the Morn,
To teach and defend his fellowmen
For which work he was born.
His soul urged him to go
He was filled with new zeal
Determined his Brothers should know
What it means, To Be Free.

Ever Onward, to reach higher ground
Helping all People to greater aim
The world in admiration now found
Dr. Washington, rightly chose, his name.
Instructing the Negroes to buy land
To study the advantage of soil
Proving his theory with his hands
Showing the profit of honest toil.

XII.

In the pleas for his race
A great Orator, was made known
Sought not for a political place
Ever striving to help his own
Respected in courts of fame
Daily honored by rich and poor,
Popularity never made him vain
But was loved as, "Booker," of old.

XIII.

Then God called his servant home
Called the Great Educator to rest
Leaving his friends to fight alone
To live forever with the Blest,
A lasting monument is left
In hearts of young and feeble
And though parted by death
He still is, Father of His People.

———:o:———

PAUL LAURANCE DUNBAR.

In eighteen seventy one,
Two freed slaves met in life;

Joshua Dunbar, Matilda Murphy's love won,
And were united as husband and wife.

Matilda from a little child,
Was a lover of poetry and art;
And always in a manner mild,
She dealt with cduel hearts.

So it was the following year,
A son to her was born;
The black face, the infant dear,
Who gave the world book and song.

At seven years of age,
New ideas entered his life;
His mind in best thoughts engaged,
And his dreams he began to write.

By birth, a genius and poet,
By writing, won world wide fame,
The black author lived to know it;
Paul Laurence Dunbar by name.

Literature, spelling, and grammer,
Were his favorite studies in school.
He was modest and timid in manners,
And obedient to the rules.

He edited the High School Times,
Which contents interesting found.
By diligence he did climb,
To success and future renown.

But at last the time had come,
To launch out and labor find.
Graduating in eighteen ninety one,
Leaving schoolmates and friends behind

His color was against all he'd done,
Every one to him seemed greater.
An elevator boy's task he begun;
Looking for recognition later.

Few flowers in his path were strewn,
But there were many thorns.
His determination was not to ruin,
The talent that was in him born.

A quaint philosophy was breathed,
In his dialect poems and prose;
Some were thoughts he achieved,
And others gleamed from stories told.

One evening Dunbar entered home,
With a smile on his face,
The first difficulty he had won,
For his people and his race.

His "Oak and Ivy poems" printed,
Made wide his reputation;
And though of African decent.
He was generous to all nations.

The poet was defender of his race;
His life work did devote her,
And his soul contents we trace,
In his Ode to Ethiophia.

To Chicago to the world's fair,
He must go aid his brother;
Alone the burden was hard to bear;
He hated to leave his mother.

But by special Providence,
He found work and friends,

Who always came to his defense,
With willing aids to lend.

Honorable Fred Douglass said,
He's a promising Colored man;
To him tribute should be paid,
For the place that he demands.

In congress in Washington,
He became efficient in literary work.
Though hardest blows he'd overcome,
Never would be duty shirk.

His fourth book, "The Lyrics and Hearth-side."
Was dedicated to Alice, his wife,
His wise counsellor and guide,
And the sunshine of his life.

Of the shadows of Rocky Mountain,
In broken health the poet cried,
"Once I drank from thy fountains,
And sat on thy rugged side.

Once I was young and strong,
A healthy robust lad,
I admired the bird songs,
I smiled when I was sad.

All men held the poet dear,
For he lived a life worth while;
Although his end was drawing near,
He was happy, calm, and mild.

He gazed on the flowers sent him,
To give his pains relief,
But in a few days left them
And was numbered with the deceased.

Doctor H. T. Tobey, of Toledo,
Mourned the loss of his friend.
He regretted the Great must go,
As the other sons of men.

Ethiophia long shall weep,
And shall always honor give,
For though the poet now doth sleep,
His work shall ever live.

———:o:———

THE SLAVE'S DYING PRAYER.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

In the year 1619 a Dutch vessel
Sailed the waters of the Black sea
With the angry waves it wrestled
Traveling to a land called the Free.
Thirty Negroes trembling with fear
Hovered in a dark and dingy hull
Many strange tongues they could hear
While fast faded the land they loved
Though they were heathens yet they prayed
With the conquering spirit of their race
To the God of stone, who ruled the day
While hope beamed on every face.

II.

At last the vessel landed at Jamestown
With it's cargo of Human Souls
Naked they stepped on slave cursed ground
And like beast of the field were sold.
For two hundred and fifty years
Our people knelt in the dust
Robbed of all a race holds dear

To satisfy the white man's lust
The tender ties of mother, father and child
Were crushed beneath feet of heartless might
They were hunted like creatures wild
Their moans were bird songs of the night.

III.

The thought of Independence burned
On the Sacred Altar of their Heart
Though humiliated and spurned
They were ready to play their part.
Engulfed in poverty, they could see
The cloud of a long and bloody strife
Stronger grew the desire to be free
To stand like men and pay the price
In the starless night of ignorance
A just God showed them the way
He gave them patience and endurance
For a God of mercy heard them pray.

IV.

The slaves wept and prayed for joy
When on April the twelfth 1863
Was fired the guns of the Civil War
In the struggle to set us free.
The Blue and Gray alike upheld
The cause they thought was right
They bravely fought and fell
Sacrificing honor and life.
In the game of Freedom and Death
The fearless Negro dashing and brave
Urged on by memories in his breast
Died to redeem the Human race.

V.

Abraham Lincoln, who believed
In the equal rights of man
Said, "To save the union I will free
All slaves through out the land."
Lincoln on January the first 1863
Issued the Emacipation, Proclamation
Declaring, the Negroes are set free
From cruel slavery and degradation.
Thus penniless, but free we left
Our old plantation homes
Facing starvation and death
Knowing not whither we roamed.

VI.

But providence was our guide
Along the rough and thorny path
Little by little we strived
To overcome the dreadful past.
Before the bar of justice the Negro stands
As the grand champion of his race
Begging and pleading for the Rights of Man
Forgetting his kinky hair and black face
In the Medical profession he longs
To lengthen and enoble life
Healing the wounds of the wronged
A bearer of the Sacred Light.

VII.

The Black Poets, doth write
Of their beloved Dixie Land
Singing of the picturesque sights
Of the hot and scorching sands;
Though poverty attended the Negroe's birth

Industry has been his home
In tilling the soil he's proved his worth
Regardless of the trials he's borne
Through sorrow and toil may be
Our humble and lowly career
Let us thank God we're free
For rest lies beyond the veil of tears.

VIII.

An old slave mammy who's hair
Is covered with snow, that never melt
Smiling prayed this dying prayer
In the land of her humble birth.
"O, God, I shall soon be with Thee
In a land where all is love
My prayers are answered, I die in peace
To join the Heavenly Hosts above,
My body shall soon return to dust
Beneath the cold and damp sod,
How sweet in death to have trust
In a true and living God.

IX.

Just as death in his chariot will come
To still my heart and bear me away
So will the prize we seek be won
When some of you sleep, beneath the clay
At last the hour has come
And she bids us a parting farewell
She has kept the faith, her work is done
And all is well, all is well."

———:o:———

THE NEGRO'S PROGRESS.

From the roaring cannons of sixty five,
From the hour the Negroes were alive;

They thankfully thanked the God of peace
Who them from bondage did release.

Departing from ones that once knew success,
Helpless, launched out to do their best
And in the struggle to be recognized,
They were oft defeated on every side.

But with sincerety that cannot be stilled,
They, educational schools begun to build;
Making progress, but failed to know it,
Until Literature welcomed its black slave poet.
As famous actors, they played their part;
They demanded fame in the world of art;
From Colored papers can be traced,
The progress of a short freed race.

Coming from poor farmers our songsters found
The door of progress opened to renown;
Our graduates of college sought no rest,
Until the world had received their best.

Blacksmiths and carpenters were in demand,
Lawyers and doctors each took their stand.
Slave orators, the people did address
Telling them of the black brother's progress.

From the pulpit they learned of God;

By reading books their minds grew broad;
They were honest and loved one another,
And never forgot their weaker brother.

For they by the aid of Providence,
Their missionaries to African shores sent,
To teach them of their own accord,
To worship the true and living God.

Thus many have crossed the reckless sea
And seek knowledge of people free
To learn, that others they might reach,
To return home and their kindred teach.
With helping hands go to their defense,
That their hearts then might be content.
In school they've learned to be clever;
They are taught to stick together

They have musicians and chorus bands,
They organize lodges throughout the land;
Work in factories of every kind;
Being industrious, they'll always labor find.

Own nice homes and large fertile farms
With modern conveniences to multiply their charms.
Run hotels and stores in every state,
Work on boats, passenger trains and freights.

In prominent banks they are clerks;

For firms they're doing real estate work;
Our specialists and dentists are having success,
Ranking like the whites, with the best.

Our editors of papers and magazines,
In writing have proved to be serene;
Colored stenographers hold positions that pay;
Chauffers are hired by months and days.

Elevator boys are paid by the week;
Black cops are bravely guarding their beats;
Contractors and plasterers do efficient work;
Bankers and business men are thousands worth.

Lecturers tell how the black race rose;
How great leaders among them were choose;
How the bleeding backs from slavery's chains,
Rose up to be a people again.

Clouds of darkness and then shown light
That awaken minds to opportunities of life.
If this be true why not stand,
And demand all rights due to man.

For though progress we've made 'tis true
There is still greater work to do.
There should be love for one another;
Love that envieth not its brother.

But delights in mankind's success,
That strives in life to be best.
When we stand as great men stood,
And as a people unite in brotherhood.

We'll not by other race be passed;
Or with the ignorant ones be classed.
We'll not in the rear be shoved;
We'll not be dispised but loved.

We'll not be Jim Crowed or scorned;
Or hate the day that we were borned.
We then can realize education's worth.
We'll know how to appreciate freedom's birth.

We can face the difficulties of life;
Can be true to the stars and stripes.
Then gladly our enemies we'll befriend.
We will help the sons of men.

And through the land the message send;
"We're rising through love and not revenge,
We're rising with praise and jubilee song
We're rising to righten the wrong."

"We're rising for we could not rest,
Until the black boys had made progress
Rising to praise the ruler of all,
Who caused bondage's strong chains to fall.

Rising as pilgrims of the night;
Rising to defend the right;
Rising till Ethiophia stretches forth her hands,
And claims her people of the land.

THE COST OF REPENTANCE.

(Original Poem by Ada Tessibel Peters.)

As the Sun sank behind the mountain
  And the flowers bowed their heads
Earth was watered from Heaven's Fountain,
  While I mourned with my dead.
Through the window the stars gazed
  Upon my mother's form,
Listening they heard me pray
  For all I had was gone.
Upon her calm face I read
  My future destiny
Her soul had fled
  Into Eternity.

II.

"Mother," I cry,
  But she hears me not
For motionless she lies
  Upon my childhood cot.
Deep wrinkles I carved
  Upon her once fair face
I've sinned against God
  Behold the price I pay,
Her eyes now closed in sleep
  With tears I often filled
It is now my time to weep
  For the heart I broke is still.

III.

A vision rose before me
  Revealing my deeds of the past
From that scene, I tried to flee
  But memory held me fast.
I saw my comrades dance

Down a broad and smooth road
At first I thought them emigrants
But on their backs, they bore no load,
Just ahead these words I beheld
In letters large and bold
"The road that leads to hell
To shame and endless woe."

IV.

I see my people
In the gambling dens
Squabbling and cheating
As they lose and win.
Some child is crying for bread
Some poor form trembles with cold
It's father to this den is led
While poverty knocks at his door.
His wife haggard and worn
On the verge of death
For years this burden has borne
Longs for rest, sweet rest.

V.

To my pleadings they payed no heed
While cruel death lay in wait
But with merry and dancing feet
Stumbled on to meet their fate
Hark I hear Cries of distress
Wails and shrieks of woe
Prayers of agony ascend for help
They are prisoners of the foe
Lo, a gulf opens
And head long in they fall
The dying words that are spoken
"Hide me from an, Angry God."

VI.

My comrades on the ball-room floor

Are dancing the dance of death
Vile men lurk within the door
Garbed in the best of dress,
Some mother's daughter is deceived
As she partakes of wine
Her partner's false words are believed
For he's attractive and kind.
Ah, if she could have read
The motive in his heart
From his clutch would have fled
While her fair name bore no blot.

VII.

I had followed but yesterday
This fatal and sinful crowd
I found myself trying to pray
Pleading with a merciful God
I have spurned God's Saints
And his words put to scorn
Fighting for worldly fame
Trying to live alone
Mother's prayer has saved me
From an early grave
My soul from sin she freed
Her life for me she gave.

VIII.

When my youthful days are o'er
And my hair is faded gray
When my steps are weak and slow
And my form is bent with age,
Mother welcome will be
That long and sweet repose
To live once more with thee
In thy blest abode
Life's journey'll be ended
But friends you'll not forget
Humanity's cause I defended
When my eye-lids are closed in death

THE DEFENDER OF RIGHT.

On the lonely bank of Nolin creek,
The full moon looked down and smiled
While the bubbling waters tried to speak
Of the new born loved cabin child.
The tall green shaggy forest pine,
Round the little log cabin swayed,
And seemed to whisper to eighteen nine,
We're proud of the sun you gave,
Song birds from their lofty height,
Sang to sleep the farm house babe,
And the watch dog through the night,
Guarded the crib of sleeping Abe.

II.

But time fast on its journey sped,
Never tiring of its weary load;
And to Indiana Abe Lincoln led,
To help find a new abode.
The Lincoln family near Gentryville
Ceased their long tiresome roam.
Aided by King forest timber to build,
They soon entered their new log home;
And though unprotected from the cold,
Was the rude log planked shelter.
Young Abe lived without fret or scold,
Till Providence gave them better.

III.

The healthy robust country lad,
In making new furniture took pride,
For thoughts of living made him glad,
In a cabin of four strong sides.
'Twas in that cabin loft at night
Mid the hum of birds and bees,
Our hero dreamed of bonfires bright,

On his bed of sweet smelling leaves.
When restless cattle in their stalls,
Lowed for their meal of hay,
Lincoln went forth to his daily toil,
And forgot his dreams of play.

IV.

Suddenly in the midst of childhood joy,
Came Death, the unwelcome brother,
And took from the happy country boy,
His kind, loving, faithful mother.
The grieved, young, brave loyal heart
Beat slow through the hour of pain,
Left alone to play a Christian's part
Till they'd meet to ne'er part again.
When the world was lost in gloom,
And mankind was fast asleep
Abe wept besides his mother's tomb,
Till his soul in prayer found peace.

V.

Ever upward in life he was reaching,
His just debts he always paid,
And true to his mothers teaching,
He was rightfully called Honest Abe.
As a flower comes from its bud,
To make the gloomy pathway bright,
So the poor son of noble blood
Came to cheer man in his strife.
Though tired by the fire at night,
He would not from duty shirk,
But learned how to read and write,
Thus preparing for lifes great work.

VI.

In the wild forest of Illinois,
With no company save his ax,

Unaccustomed to life's luxury and joy,
He split rails to clothe his back.
And though stronger were his brawny arms
Than any of the shrewd school lads,
He was never known to do them harm,
For a kind loving heart he had.
Ever ready to help those in need,
But I want you to understand,
He could help a drowning pig,
As well as his fellow man.

VII.

And as old time grew faster
This bare footed boy so free,
Became a surveyor and postmaster,
And a lawyer honored for honesty.
Faithful in little things among the few,
There came to him a greater call;
Elected four times to State Legislature,
And from there to Congress hall,
But this tall, green, awkward, man
Was not ready yet to stop,
He was needed for a greater stand,
For his place was at the top.

VIII.

So the rail splitter's time had come,
And all that he'd hoped to be;
Beneath the stars of sixty one,
Stood as President of the free.
The loyal defender of Union and Right,
Saw a rising struggle mid the brave;
While on each side man gave life,
He pitied the four million slaves.
To preserve the Union was his stand,
And to protect the Stars and Stripes.

But he could not rest while man
Was robbed of freedom and right.

IX.

In the cherished year of sixty three,
Lincoln performed and act of bravery.
And his fellow men set free,
Forever from the pangs of slavery.
Thus the welcomed year of sixty five,
Untold joy to mankind brought,
Making humanity proud and alive,
For the freedom they long had sought.
And as ye journey sons of Ham,
Forget not how the cause was won,
By our loyal martyr, God's chosen man,
Our true, honored, loved, Abraham
Lincoln.

———:o:———

SONS OF W. V. I.

(By Ada T. Peters.)

Uncle Sam we give Our Sons
The sons of W. V. I.
To the struggle just begun
That World Freedom may not die.

II.

Though we're from the mountains
From the valley and the dale,
We drank from Liberty's Fountain,
That flowed freely, by the way.

III.

President Prillerman taught us
While infants, in student life,
To place our love and trust,
In the good old Stars and Stripes.

IV.

The sons of W. V. I.
  Each persued his daily task
When we heard Humanity's Cry
  And saw war clouds rising fast.

V.

"Boys, 'tis Duty that has called,"
  Rang on the Institute lawn
Books and tools began to fall
  As the truth, slowly dawned.

VI.

So farewell W. V. I.
  We must leave you now
We go to fight and die
  That justice may be found.

———:o:———

MUSING.

(By E. P. Peters.)

I sat by my window at even-tide,
  While the sun sank in the west.
I was far from home,
  And my heart was sad
And filled with a keen unrest.

I sighed for the days that passed,
  Like pleasant dreams of night,
Tears of sadness coursed
Down my cheeks,
As the sun sank from my sight.

I thought of all the happy hours,
  I had spent round the dear home fire,

With lessons to learn,
And nuts to crack,
Not more did my heart desire.

I longed for the food my mother prepared
  That now I seemed to taste,
I longed for the crumbs,
From the cubbard shelves,
That once I used to waste.

I sighed for the friends I loved so well;
  But my sighs seemed all in vain;
I turned towards the skies,
And prayed this prayer,
"Lord let me get home again."

"Home where my mother and father
      dwell
  Home where abides peace and rest.
For I felt like a bird,
In a cold strange land,
Far from its native nest.

Home to the ones that love me;
  To the friends that never grow old;
Who think of me kindly,
Wherever I am,
Though others to them grow cold.

I sit and dream and deeply grieve,
  For the scenes that are no more;
For the sound of my mother's loving
      voice,
As she called me,
From the door.

I see again my father's face,
  As he called me to his side,

And bade me live a noble life,
Whatever might betide.

He bade me in my life at school,
What ever else took place,
To live for God and fatherland and
The honor of my race.

O, God, do grant my humble cry,
And help me on my way;
Help me to help my fellow man, and
Cheer him on his way.

W 23

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